

12 | Recommendations

This section draws on the data and information presented in this report to develop a list of potential recommendations for the City of Durham Downtown parking system. The recommendations outlined in this section are generally consistent with the ideas expressed by the public and stakeholders during outreach efforts, the findings of the existing conditions review and parking demand analysis, operations and management assessment, existing wayfinding and parking guidance review, and the results of the financial analysis. The proposed recommendations are grouped based on whether they are improvements to the on-street, off-street, or the overall parking system. Finally, these recommendations are based on planning level analysis and should be investigated further before actual design and construction/implementation are started.

On-Street Parking System

Paid On-Street Parking

As a result of the public and stakeholder outreach, as well as the duration and turnover data that was collected, it became evident that time limits for on-street parking spaces in the Downtown study were being exceeded by visitors and downtown employees. The on-street parking system should be operated and enforced to encourage high turnover of vehicles, resulting in a lively and business friendly Downtown environment. Taking into account the feedback obtained as a result of the outreach process, paired with the assessment of available on-street parking technology and best practices, it is recommended that the City begin to implement a paid on-street parking program in 2014/2015, with the goal of the system being operational approximately January 2015.

Figure 12.1 shows the block-faces that are recommend for paid on-street parking implementation, which represents approximately 750 spaces within the Downtown study area. These block-faces were generally identified as those that exceeded 60% occupancy for at least two consecutive hours. In general, paid on-street parking is recommended to be implemented within and adjacent to the Downtown Loop, the area surrounding the American Tobacco Campus and the Durham Performing Arts Center, West Village, and the southern portion of the Brightleaf District.

The hourly rate for parking in City-owned off-street parking garages is currently at \$1.00 per hour and the recommended rate for on-street parking in the areas identified in Figure 12.1 is \$1.25 per hour. This relationship (higher rate for on-street, lower rate for off-street) encourages those with plans to stay in the area for longer periods of time to use the off-street facilities leaving the on-street spaces for those requiring shorter durations.

Recommendations associated with paid on-street parking locations and technology should be studied and reviewed in more detail to ensure that the appropriate equipment and configurations are obtained prior to implementation. In addition, a phased implementation could be considered, pending the staff availability of the City and the capabilities of the selected equipment manufacturer.

Time Restricted Parking

Time restricted parking was also reviewed as part of this study and was determined that some areas of current restrictions should be revised to complement the on-street parking system as a whole and surrounding land uses. It is important that any time limit that is in effect be actively and consistently enforced to ensure desired levels of turnover. Refer to Figure 12.2 for the recommended time restrictions for on-street parking in the Downtown study area. These time restrictions portray existing on-street time limits along with any time limits on block faces that are recommended for change.

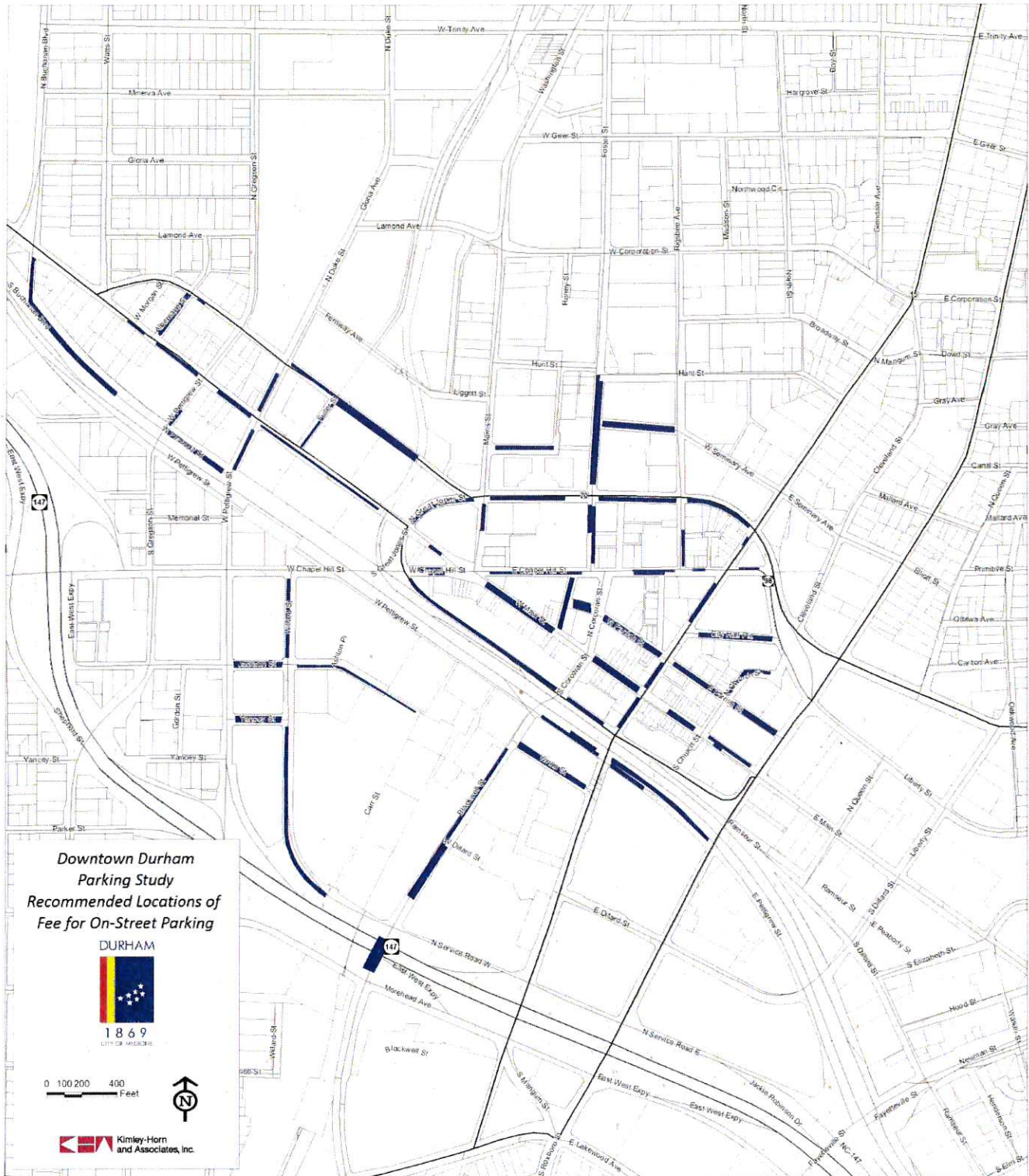


Figure 12.1 – Recommend Locations for Paid On-Street Parking

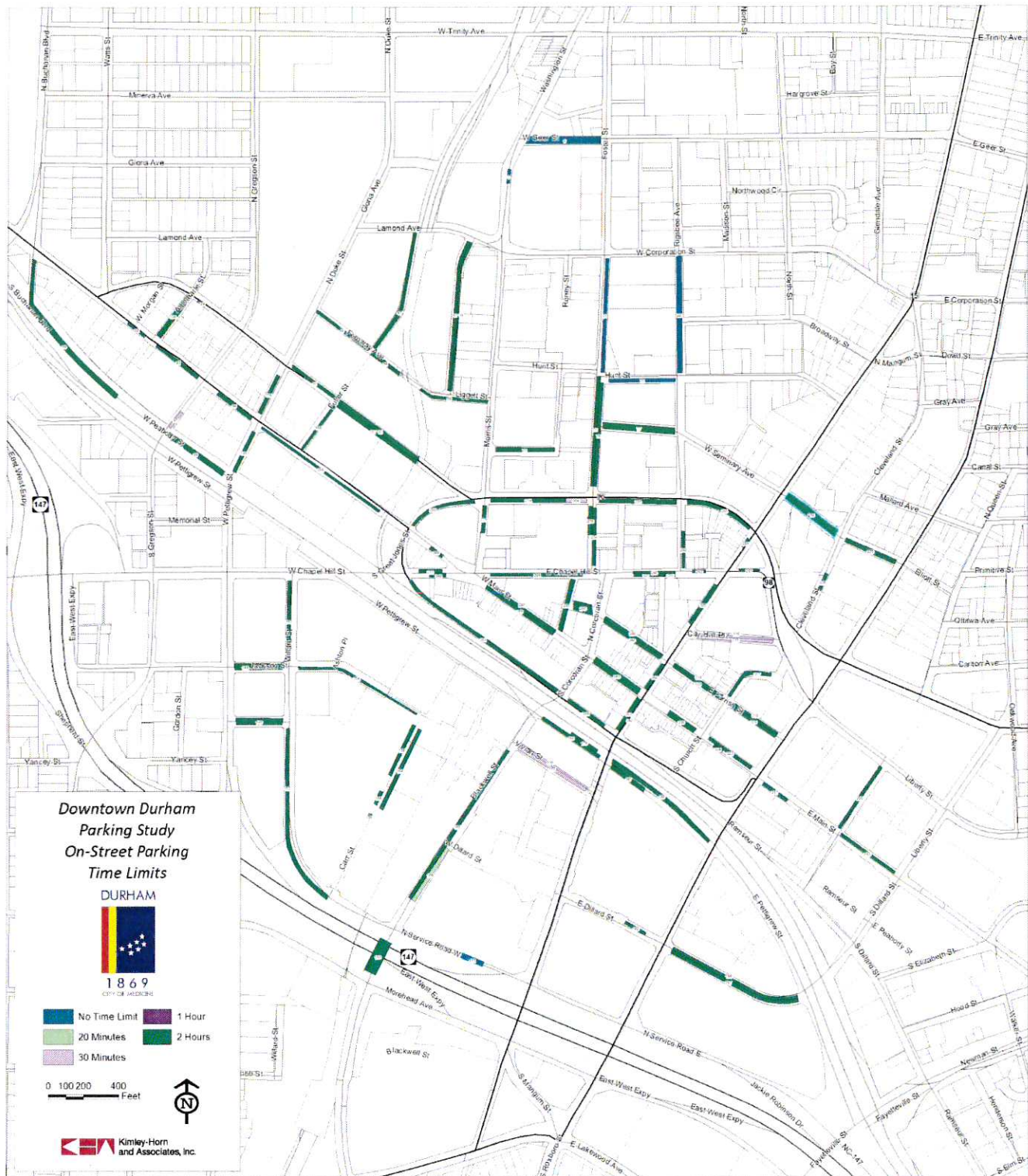


Figure 12.2 – Recommend Time Limit Restrictions for On-Street Parking

On-Street Parking Payment Technology

The available paid on-street parking technology was reviewed and assessed specific to the needs of the City of Durham and were discussed with the Parking Study Team. Options for on-street paid parking technology includes systems such as single space meters (with and without credit card payment options), pay stations including, pay-and-display and pay-by-space, pay-by-license plate, and pay-by-cell. Considering the cross section of users of the Downtown parking system varies widely between younger and older generations, it is recommended to implement a combination of payment technologies that appeal to the larger population.



The primary payment for on-street parking should be via pay-by-cell technology. This option requires a user to call or text a certain phone number when occupying a space and allows users to add time (up to the established time limit) to a virtual meter for that particular space. Mobile phone “apps” are also available for downtown to use with these virtual “parking meters”. This technology allows the flexibility of a user to add time to the meter without returning should they decide to extend their stay. Further, this technology allows for integration with smartphone applications that, with the proper infrastructure, could help direct Downtown visitors to available parking spaces, thus decreasing search times and street congestion.

Realizing that not every visitor to Downtown Durham is technically savvy enough or willing to utilize the pay-by-cell option, pay-by-space pay stations are recommended to be installed to supplement the paid on-street parking system. Pay-by-space allows the user to type their space number into the pay station without requiring the user to return to their vehicle. Once a user activates a certain amount of time within the pay station or through the pay-by-cell option, additional time can be added from any pay station or via cell phone up to the posted time restriction. This configuration provides the most flexibility for users as it makes payment easy and convenient.

The implementation of a fee for on-street parking, no matter what approach is used, requires active enforcement. Both the pay-and-display and pay-by-cell options offer tools to aid the enforcement personnel in their efforts. However, either system will require changes to the parking system management contract the City has with Lanier Parking Solutions and the City should be prepared to renegotiate this agreement.

Recommendations associated with paid on-street parking locations and technology should be studied and reviewed in more detail to ensure that the appropriate equipment and configurations are obtained prior to implementation and that ADA regulations are met. In addition, a phased implementation could be considered, pending the staff availability of the City and the capabilities of the selected equipment manufacturer.

On-Street Hours of Operation

Currently, on-street hours of operations are between the hours of 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM, whereas off-street is between the hours of 8:00 AM and 7:00 PM. It is recommended that the City maintain the hours of operation of on-street spaces of 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, including when the paid on-street system is implemented.



North Carolina General Statute Update

North Carolina General Statutes states that “parking meters may be activated by coins or tokens”; however, the statute remains silent specific to the use of cash or credit cards. It is likely that “coins” is intended to be synonymous with “cash”, but the relationship with “credit cards” is not as straightforward within the policy. This study recommends implementation of a paid on-street parking system that utilizes technological advances for payment that rely on credit card use, either through the pay-by-call or pay station options.

Currently, many cities within North Carolina have already made the transition to credit card payment; however, a potential conflict still could remain with the language as stated in the General Statute. As a result, it is recommended that the City seek partnership with the North Carolina League of Municipalities, to update the North Carolina General Statute, specifically Section 160A-301 Parking, to reflect current parking industry practices and remove ambiguity.

North Carolina General Statute § 160A-301. Parking

(a) On-Street Parking. – A city may by ordinance regulate, restrict, and prohibit the parking of vehicles on the public streets, alleys, and bridges within the city. When parking is permitted for a specified period of time at a particular location, a city may install a parking meter at that location and require any person parking a vehicle therein to place the meter in operation for the entire time that the vehicle remains in that location, up to the maximum time allowed for parking there. Parking meters may be activated by coins or tokens. Proceeds from the use of parking meters on public streets must be used to defray the cost of enforcing and administering traffic and parking ordinances and regulations.

Curb-Lane Management

This study provides recommendation to converting existing time limit restricted on-street parking spaces to paid parking. As a result, the nature of on-street parking in the Downtown study area is likely to evolve through implementation of a paid on-street parking program. To ensure that the City is allocating, operating, and managing their Downtown on-street block-faces effectively, it is recommended that a curb-lane management study be performed. This type of study has proven to be very successful to other cities, such as the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, as it provides a plan for the most efficient allocation of parking along each block-face. Types of uses could include hourly parking spaces, commercial and vehicular loading zones, valet stands, taxi lanes, bus stops, and residential parking. In addition to properly allocating parking, the study should also aim to provide consistent, easily understood signage designs that communicate the assigned uses and restrictions along each block-face.

Construction Activity On-Street Parking Loss

Currently, it is fairly common for construction within the downtown area to result in dumpsters being placed in existing on-street parking spaces. When this occurs, the City loses potential revenue, as the space is taken out of service. The City should require contractors and others that block on-street spaces to pay what is equivalent to the maximum daily amount for a full day of hourly parking. This would equate to the recommended hourly rate of \$1.25 per hour over a 9 hour period, or \$11.25 per day. It is recommended that the City implement this fee immediately, rather than waiting for the paid on-street system to be implemented.

Off-Street Parking System

City and State Owned Vehicle

Currently, the top level of the Chapel Hill Street garage is isolated and reserved for the storage of City owned vehicles during evenings. During the day, the space is open to the public for parking though the gates and fences provide the appearance that parking is reserved for City vehicles only.

Considering that the Chapel Hill Street garage is in such high demand (refer to Table 12.1) due to its prime location within the Downtown Loop and adjacency to City Hall and the Post Office, it is recommended that the City relocate the City and State owned vehicles to a less utilized parking facility (potentially the Durham Centre garage).

Table 12.1 –Parking Garage Peak Occupancy

Garage	Peak Occupancy
Chapel Hill Street	100%
Corcoran Street	66%
Church Street	61%
Durham Centre	25%

Chapel Hill Street Parking Lot

The surface parking lot located immediately south of the Chapel Hill Street garage was observed to have high demand during the hours of data collection. This lot is in a prime location; however, during our data collection it was observed that some of the vehicles parked in the lot were there for the entire data collection period. It is recommended that this lot be managed in a manner to achieve higher turnover. To do this, it is recommended that the surface lot be restricted to hourly users only, with monthly users required to park inside the garage.

Lot 8 Hourly Rate

With the recent relocation of the Durham County Courthouse from the Judicial Building adjacent to Lot 8 to the new Justice Center Complex south of the Downtown Loop, the revenues generated from Lot 8 have declined drastically. Currently, Lot 8 is an hourly only surface lot with a rate of \$2.00 for the first hour, then \$1.00 for each additional hour up to a daily maximum of \$10.00. Considering the drastic decrease in hourly revenue generated from Lot 8, it is recommended that the City revise the rates in Lot 8 to be similar to hourly rates in other city-owned facilities – \$1.00 per hour with a daily maximum of \$8.00.

In addition, Lot 8 should be considered to be used for monthly permit parking as well, similar to Lot 14. The City should monitor its hourly parking demand and implement monthly parking if hourly use is down as a result of the County Courthouse relocation.

Monthly Permit Rate Increase

Existing parking rates in the City of Durham are of the lowest in the state based on the peer city review efforts as part of this study. It is recommended that the City increase monthly parking permit rates to a value that is more consistent with regional and peer cities. Considering the desire for the City of Durham to develop a self-funded Parking Enterprise Fund, it is recommended that the City increase monthly permit rates to be in line with local and regional peer cities to boost revenue and bring the system closer to financial stability.

Monthly permit rates for City-owned facilities are \$55.00 per month for a typical space and \$70.00 per month for a reserved space in any of the garages and \$45.00 for a monthly space in a surface lot. Regional peer cities monthly permit rates range from \$60.00 – 130.00 for parking garages and \$40.00 – 60.00 for surface lots. It is recommended that the City immediately implement a \$10.00 per month increase in all monthly permit rates,

including City-owned garages and surface lots. With a total of approximately 1,772 monthly permits currently issued in City-owned facilities, excluding North Deck, this would result in an increase in annual revenue of approximately \$212,000 in 2013/2014. The current contractual agreement with American Tobacco restricts the City from raising rates in the North Deck beyond those of which are outlined in the current agreement between these two entities. These maximum rates are lower than the recommended permit increases at other City owned facilities and as a result it is recommended that the City increase the rate in the North Deck annually to those maximum rates which are outlined in the agreement.

A tiered rate approach could be implemented where monthly permit rates are higher for those facilities that are in higher demand. However, it is our understanding the City desires to maintain a consistent rate between all similar type facilities, and as such an across the board \$10.00 increase to monthly permit rates beginning in 2013/2014 as described is recommended.

Special Event Rate Increase

Currently, special event parking is \$2.00 per vehicle at all City-owned garages with the exception of the North Deck where the rate is \$4.00 per vehicle. To more align Durham events with those of other cities, it is recommended for the City to increase all special event rates by \$1.00 to a total of \$3.00 and \$5.00 depending on the facility. The resulting increase in revenue is estimated to be approximately \$60,000 in 2013/2014.

Residential Permits

The City issues a residential permit to Downtown residents at a current rate of \$10 per month, which allows access to garages outside of normal operating hours. These permit holders assume that the monthly permit should allow access to City-owned facilities at any time of any day of the week. Several complaints from these permit holders have surfaced during public outreach efforts specifically related to the availability of parking in the garages during events when Downtown has its highest number of visitors. In actuality, there are likely Downtown residents that require access to City-owned garages to meet their parking needs.

To be mindful of Downtown residents and their needs, it is recommended that the City develop and advertise a new specific residential permit that provides a 24/7 reserved space. This permit option should provide 24/7 access to a reserved parking space in a parking facility closest to the permit holders place of residence. Considering a typical monthly permit only guarantees access into a City facility during typical weekday work hours and this reserved permit would provide 24/7 access, the monthly rate of the reserved residential permit should be higher than that of a typical monthly permit. It is recommended that the rate for a 24/7 reserved residential permit be \$90 per month.

In addition to the 24/7 reserved space permit, the City should maintain their residential permit that allows access outside of normal operating hours. To be consistent with other permits, this residential permit rate should be increased from \$10 to \$20 per month. The City should consider phasing out this permit at this cost and phasing in residential permit rates across the board that more closely align with current market rates.

It is important that the City take into account residential permit holders, particularly 24/7 reserved space permit, when providing event parking and typical visitor parking, especially on nights and weekends. An appropriate number of spaces equal to the number of 24/7 reserved residential permit holders must be made available and enforced appropriately at all hours of the day.

Long Term Leases

The City is currently obligated to provide 50 spaces in the Corcoran Street garage in a long-term lease agreement with hotel ownership. Considering the current financial deficit at which the Parking Fund operates, it is not

recommended that the City consider long term leases in the future. All monthly leases should be offered on a month-to-month basis, with no bulk or duration discount.

Parking Facility Assessments

As the City-owned infrastructure continues to age it is important that appropriate assessments and maintenance is performed to maximize the life of the facilities. This concept is important for parking garages, but is just as relevant for surface lots as well. The City has recently started a project to assess the long-term maintenance needs of all City-owned garages. The information resulting from that project will provide the City with useful information regarding long-term maintenance costs associated with parking garage improvements. As part of this study, it is recommended that the City also perform a similar assessment for City-owned surface lots. The assessments of the garages paired with the recommended assessment of surface lots will road map a 10 year budget plan for on-going maintenance and future repairs. With benchmark assessments such as this, the Parking Fund can more easily prepare for the inevitable recurring costs associated with facility maintenance. While a system wide assessment is underway for the City-owned garages, specific attention should be paid to the Chapel Hill Street garage, as it has many visible areas of deterioration.

As the City of Durham aims to have a self-funded parking program and implements increases in parking rates, it is important that the City avoids deferring maintenance, as those that pay to park in Downtown will expect well maintained facilities.

Future Garages

To meet future demand in the Downtown study area, the City should begin to plan for the potential need for future City-owned parking garages. Two sites for potential garages were identified within the Downtown Loop to meet the demand in the City Center, while another location is recommended in the Central Park District to support growth in the northern portion of the study area.

The two sites within the Downtown Loop are on existing City-owned property at the southwest and southeast corners of West Morgan Street and Rigsbee Avenue. Each of these sites were studied to determine the number of parking spaces that are attainable within the available space in the existing lots, as well as the potential to incorporate retail space within the structure. One conceptual layout for each site was developed and is included in Appendix B. In addition to these two sites within the Downtown Loop, conceptual plans have been developed by others for Lot 8 (located at Church Street and Parrish Street) as a potential parking development site.

A specific garage site in the Central Park area was not identified, as the location should be driven by the magnitude and mix of future development in the district. It is likely however, that a future garage with retail and possibly even residential units in this district is required to meet potential future demand.

Should existing City-owned parking be removed from the Downtown inventory, the parking demand model should be revisited to analyze the impact of that loss in parking. Potential scenarios where City-owned parking facilities could be removed from the Downtown inventory could include development opportunities on existing surface lot or garage parcels or large-scale garage repair/replacement efforts to remedy structural deterioration. For instance, the parcel within the Downtown Loop that contains the current Chapel Hill Street garage and surface lot is an attractive redevelopment site. Pairing this with the age and condition of the existing Chapel Hill Street garage, the City is considering selling the parcel for the parking garage to be demolished and redeveloped. Should this scenario unfold, it is recommended that the parking supply be replaced in one of the identified sites within the Downtown Loop prior to removing the existing supply from the inventory. In any event, the available parking inventory during each phase of implementation must be considered to ensure adequate parking supply for Downtown visitors, employees, and residents.

Public/Private Partnerships

While the need for the City to plan for and build standalone parking may be required, the City should put priority on building parking infrastructure within the study area through public/private partnerships. This approach maximizes land use within Downtown and minimizes City staffing requirements to plan, facilitate, and construct standalone parking facilities. It also better aligns parking inventory with demand, as additional City supply would be incorporated within the development.

There are two public/private partnership models that could be considered when planning and implementing public parking – City-owned and privately-owned. In the City-owned model (i.e. Asheville, N.C., Aloft Hotel at 51 Biltmore) the City and Developer would jointly contribute financially to fund the construction of the proposed parking garage. Prior to construction of the garage, the parties would agree how many spaces would be needed by the development and how many spaces are needed for public parking. The financial agreement between the City and Developer may be similar to a “condominium” agreement, where the Developer “owns” their parking spaces and they contribute to the ongoing garage maintenance expense. In the City-owned model, the City typically manages, or outsources, the management functions of the garage. However, to the public, the garage operates like other garages owned by the City.

In the privately-owned garage model, the Developer constructs, owns, and manages the parking garages, but agrees to build, and set aside, a number of parking spaces for public use. The City may contribute to the construction cost of the garage and may share in the parking revenues. Due to the construction costs of new parking garages, it is typical for new parking garages to receive some level of public subsidy.

The expense and revenue sharing options available to Cities and Developers are essentially unlimited and dependent upon the parties agreeing to terms that meet their needs. Before pursuing a Public Private Partnership, both parties should understand the needs and limitations of the other party.

A potential project that could fit into this public/private partnership approach that is currently in planning stages is the proposed Woolworth Site within the City Center. This project currently plans for enough parking to support a portion of the needs of the development; however, the City would benefit in many facets if they could partner with the developer to incorporate public parking into the project. In addition to the Woolworth site, a future garage located in the Central Park District could provide an opportunity for a public/private partnership.

Parking Access and Revenue Control Equipment

A review of existing City-owned parking access and revenue control equipment yields mixed results. Most of the parking equipment in City-owned facilities has been upgraded in recent years or is in the process of being upgraded. Part of these upgrades included the use of pay-in-lane technology, which could allow the City to pay upon exiting a facility without the need for an attendant. Considering these fairly recent upgrades, it is not recommended that the City invest resources into the replacement of equipment across all facilities in the near term. As part of this endeavor, the City should emphasize the use of machines able to accept both cash and credit cards, which should enable the collection of additional revenue during weekend and after-hours periods. The City should also put emphasis on machinery with the ability to maintain space counts for use in parking management decisions and potentially in parking wayfinding.

It is also recommended that the City continue to move down their current path of implementing a 24/7 gates down operation. Currently, the parking access control gates are raised at outside of normal operating hours and vehicles are able to enter and exit freely without the need to pull a ticket or pay for the duration of their stay. This method of operation results in the loss of revenue for those that pull a ticket prior to 7:00 PM, but exit, without paying, after 7:00 PM when the gates are up. To capture this loss of revenue, the City plans to operate facilities such that access gates are down 24 hours per day requiring users to pull a ticket no matter the time of

day or day of week they enter. However, upon exit, users will only be required to pay for the portion of time they used the facility during normal operating hours (8:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Monday – Friday).

First Hour Free

Following the implementation of a paid on-street parking program, the City should review on- and off-street user patterns and consider implementing a first hour free program in the off-street facilities, particularly garages. The intent behind a first hour free program in off-street facilities is to incentivize users of the on-street system to park off-street, thus freeing up prime on-street spaces and encouraging turnover where it is most critical.

Armory Surface Lot

The surface lot adjacent and to the south of the Historic Armory and across the street from the main entrance into the Convention Center is currently owned by the County, but managed and operated by the City of Durham. It is recommended that this lot be operated as a fee based lot with a pay station. No gates would be required, but a single pay station would be installed where users of the lot would be required to pay for their stay. This would require coordination between, and approval of, Durham County and the City of Durham.

Surface Lots within Paid On-Street Extents

There are many surface lots within the extents of where paid on-street parking is recommended. In these lots, the City should install pay stations that would require users to pay for time in which they occupy space within these public lots. Similar to the Armory surface lot recommendation, gates would not be required, rather a single pay station per lot would be installed that would provide a location for users to pay for their stay.

Overall Parking System

Improved Parking Management

Currently, parking is managed within the City of Durham through a combination of people and departments. It is recommended that the City either appoint or hire a single staff member as the Parking Manager to oversee all parking related issues from policy, planning and design, construction, maintenance, and management. The Parking Manager would coordinate parking projects and initiatives with other City departments and the business and residential community. The Parking Manager would also be responsible for maintaining and updating the parking inventory and utilization databases (Park+) prepared as part of this study.

Once a dedicated Parking Manager is in place, a larger staff should be developed around this individual to effectively meet the obligations and responsibilities of the parking unit. Recommending an exact staff size is difficult to estimate, as the nuances of each municipality differ. The City should continually examine the roles and responsibilities of the parking unit as the program continues to evolve and adjust staff as necessary.

Parking Enterprise Fund

As the parking program becomes more developed and sophisticated, including the implementation of paid on-street parking and off-street rate increases, it is recommended that the City fully implement a Parking Enterprise Fund. This policy would ensure that all net revenues collected from the parking system, including both on- and off-street parking, would be allocated to a specific fund that would be used to pay for public improvements in the area in which the revenues were collected. For instance, parking revenues obtained from paid parking in the Downtown study area could be used to provide improved street lighting, updated wayfinding, or parking garage

maintenance and repair items. Cities with Parking Enterprise Funds typically also use parking revenues to fund debt service and maintenance associated with new and existing parking facilities. This type of arrangement is typically well received by the public, as the rates they are paying for parking is being reallocated to improve their experience when visiting Downtown in the future. Future parking garage maintenance is projected in the financial analysis section of this document and was estimated to be \$250 per space per year, taking into account aesthetics and maintenance of the various systems including structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and parking control equipment.

Improve Security

Based on results of the public and stakeholder outreach efforts, security in and around City-owned parking facilities is lacking, with specific concern at night. The main complaints were centered on lighting in main paths of travel between parking facilities and Downtown business and entertainment destinations. The City has recently improved lighting conditions in the Durham Centre, Corcoran Street, and Church Street garages as part of larger renovation projects. It is recommended that the City investigate upgrading lighting in their remaining parking facilities, including surface lots and the Chapel Hill Street garage.

Currently, security guards patrol the City-owned parking garages from 5:00 PM – 12:00 PM, seven days per week. The Durham Centre and Chapel Hill Street garages each have a dedicated security guard during this time and the Corcoran Street and Church Street garages share one security guard that patrols both facilities. Between the hours of 12:00 PM and 8:00 AM there are no security guards on duty; however, the police department patrols periodically. Considering the uncertainty that the public and stakeholders communicated regarding security in parking facilities and along public ways from these facilities, it is recommended that the City elevate security guard or ambassador presence at these locations, such that there is at least a patrol presence 24 hours per day.

Security cameras provide a sense of security, as it passively communicates that someone is watching users of a facility to keep them safe. In reality, that sense of security is perceived as higher than actuality since a majority of security systems in parking facilities are not monitored 24 hours per day. Specific to security cameras, it is recommended that the City Attorney and City Manager review the risks and benefits associated with the installation of security cameras in parking facilities prior to making a decision regarding installation. CCTV surveillance capabilities should be considered for installation at all garages.

Parking Wayfinding

The City's existing parking wayfinding attempts to direct parkers to available parking facilities. However, the signage lacks consistency and frequency to effectively guide visitors to parking destinations. In the past several years, the City performed a pedestrian level wayfinding program implementation providing signage with small font and graphics focused on directing those walking through Downtown. This program effectively uses color coding and district naming to delineate the several areas of Downtown. It is recommended that the City implement a signage system focused on vehicular movements throughout the study area utilizing larger signage, font, and graphics, as well as similar color coding and district delineation as used in the pedestrian signage.

In addition, the City should investigate technology based solutions to help parkers navigate the Downtown parking system, including implementing a parking guidance system that would indicate available spaces by parking garage on dynamic signage placed throughout the City. These signs would be located at key entrance points to the City, which are primary access points to Downtown. These signs would enhance driver navigation to available parking, reduce vehicular congestion on Downtown streets, and working with the City's updated wayfinding signage, should lead to much lower driver confusion and a more even utilization of the off-street

parking supply. This recommendation would require that the City's new revenue collection equipment be equipped with space counting capabilities, which would need to be coordinated with the signage system.

The above wayfinding recommendation should be implemented in a phased approach. Static wayfinding similar to existing pedestrian signage should be the primary focus of the City. Once this signage system is in place and appropriate parking access equipment has been upgraded at City-owned facilities, the City should then begin the process of incorporating City-wide parking guidance capabilities. Implementation of this technology could then be integrated with website and mobile applications that could allow Downtown visitors to visually see available parking on their computer or smartphone.

Parking Brand

Many cities including Raleigh, NC, Eugene, OR, and San Francisco, CA, have developed a specific brand for the experience of parking in their facilities that markets and communicates to the community the range and variety of parking and transportation service options, as well as the standard of quality service, facility up-keep, consistent equipment and features that can be found at their facilities. This focus on communication of services and standard of quality of facilities is typically branded by consistent signage in each City-owned facility. It is typical that branding a parking system will impact and elevate the quality of private facilities, providing an overall boost to the impression of parking, transportation, and safety in a community.

It is recommended that the City develop a brand for public parking in Durham. Once a brand is developed the associated logo and name should be consistently used on all City-owned facility identifying signage, as well as the City parking website. Consistent marketing and advertisement should improve the perception of parking in Downtown Durham.

Parking Ambassador Model

The City, with Downtown Durham, Inc. as a partner, should implement a parking ambassador model to parking enforcement in Durham. In general, the public perceives paid on-street parking as an unnecessary need for a City to collect revenue and issue citations. To combat this common perception, many communities have implemented an ambassador approach to enforcement. This typically equates to a staff of parking officers that patrol Durham offering visitors advice and answers regarding parking policies and limitations. In addition, parking ambassadors should be knowledgeable of the City and be available to those that seek direction to local businesses and venues. Generally, a parking ambassador model focuses on education of the public regarding the parking system, rather than stalking parked vehicles and issuing citations the minute a paid space expires. This approach goes a long way to provide a positive perception of parking in communities and considering the implementation of a paid on-street parking system, it is recommended that the City investigate this option of enforcement.

Parking Ambassadors could either be City employees or employees of Lanier Parking Solutions, who currently enforces on-street parking. Either approach would require a list of expectations and requirements of the ambassadors. For this reason, the City and Downtown Durham, Inc. should jointly be involved in the development of these requirements, as the result will impact the overall image of Durham.

Lanier Parking Solutions currently equips their enforcement officers with maps of Downtown such that they can assist the public; however, this characteristic as implemented should be revisited and expanded to be a focus of on-street enforcement presence.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

The City of Durham and Durham County have jointly developed a plan specifically related to the goal of providing electric vehicle charging stations in the *Durham City-County Electric Vehicle and Charging Station Plan* (December 2011). The plan outlines triggers and associated responses by the City and County for implementation of charging stations at several facilities throughout the study area. This study did not provide a comprehensive review of the City-County electric vehicle charging station plan, including the details associated with implementation; however, some recommendations are provided.

The implementation of electric vehicle charging stations should be driven on a demand bases, rather than installing equipment with the hopes that they will be used. The City should provide a means for the public to communicate this desire by providing a link on their website with directions on how to do so. When electric vehicle charging stations are installed, it is recommended that the following concepts remain at the forefront when finalizing policy and limitations associated with use of these spaces:

- Users of an electrical vehicle charging station space should be required to pay for the use of the space in a manner that is consistent with the facility in which it is located.
- Electric vehicle charging station spaces should be reserved for electric vehicle use only. Use of this space by non-electric vehicles should be cited.
- Use of an electric vehicle charging station space should be time restricted, to minimize the situation of one vehicle occupying the space for an entire day. The time limit should be determined on a case by case basis and be based on the charging duration requirements of the equipment being installed.

Periodic Parking Rate Increases

This study recommends a paid on-street parking program with hourly rates of \$1.25 per hour. The desired relationship between parking rates is for on-street spaces to be higher than that of off-street spaces, encouraging the use of parking garages and surface lots. Considering current hourly rates within City garages is \$1.00 per hour, this ideal relationship is achieved and as such, an increase to garage hourly rates is not recommended at this time.

It is recommended that the City increase hourly, monthly permit, and special event parking rates by 20% in 2017/2018 with an additional 20% increase in 2022/2023 to maintain consistency with inflation and the growth of the parking system and parking department. These increases assume parking rates would be increased at approximately five year intervals; however, the exact increase and timing of implementation would need to be based on actual revenues and reflect then current conditions. The City should continue to investigate rate increases every few years to maintain a healthy parking system budget, allowing appropriate maintenance of facilities and their surroundings. This recommended rate increase is in addition to the \$10.00 monthly permit rate increase previously described. In addition, this recommendation does not apply to the North Deck, as maximum monthly permit rates are dictated by current contractual agreements between the City and American Tobacco Campus ownership, as well as Triangle Transit. The City should increase monthly permit rates in the North Deck by the maximum allowed per those agreements.

Motorcycle Parking

Currently, the City has minimal, if any, dedicated spaces for motorcycle parking. In an effort to minimize the situation where a single motorcycle occupies an entire space sized for a typical vehicle, rather than several motorcycle, it is recommended that the City consider locating motorcycle parking in on- and off-street facilities

in a manner that minimizes the impact to the existing parking supply (e.g., using “dead corners” or other area that are not accessible by typical vehicles).